

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



## More fun with books

**Toddlers love hearing you make different noises while reading and love making them too!**

### Did you know?

Reading with your toddler teaches them the basics of how books work e.g. books are read front to back and words left to right in Western cultures. Tracking the words with your finger reinforces this. You are giving your toddler the building blocks they will need to be ready to read in a few years' time.

### Add language

Short, repetitive and rhyming stories help develop language in young children.

Ask occasional questions about what is happening in the pictures. You don't need to put pressure on your toddler to name the pictures or read the words. Just use the story to have a conversation. Talk about familiar things in the pictures or the story you are sharing. Give them a chance to make comments or ask questions.

Picture books are one of the best ways to build your toddler's word bank (vocabulary). They get to hear lots of new or novel words. They get to talk about things that they might not yet have experienced themselves.



### Other development

Book sharing helps develop your child's attention and concentration. Young toddlers are only able to sit for a short time. As they grow with books that interest them, they will learn to sit for longer.

Books are a great way to talk about behaviour and emotions. Talk about how a character feels, what he does when he feels that way, and what happens next.

### Variations

You can make the story come alive by creating voices and using your body to tell the story. Associating books with fun, joy and excitement creates a future keen reader!

Try out some ideas from the book e.g. "They had a picnic in the book. Let's have a picnic too!"

- Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at [www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas](http://www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas) or visit [www.facebook.com/playgroupwa](https://www.facebook.com/playgroupwa)