



## ***What to Read When***

*The Books and Stories to Read to Your Child and All the Best Times to Read Them*  
A WebbyBites Video

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### ***The Two "Whens" for Reading Aloud***

#### **The Chronological "When" -- The Reader's Ladder**

- When reading aloud to your child you can choose book a full year or two above what he or she is reading independently
- At times it can be good to read books to your child at the same level or even an easier level than what he or she can read independently
  - To affirm his or her wise reading choices
  - To share in his or her independent reading life
  - To bring more family members into the circle of the reading experience
- At every age there are books that can enhance a child's reading development
- No matter your child's age, reading aloud is an amazing way to help your child build vocabulary and gain an awareness of grammar
  - You are literally "marinating your kids in language"

#### ***Examples by Age:***

- Birth to Age Two: Beginning the Magical Journey
  - Black and white books for newborns -- research has shown that babies are particularly aware of defined distinctions between black and white tones
  - Baby face books -- babies love books with baby faces in them, these readings build their sense of themselves and their empathy
  - Tactile books for newborns -- babies love strong visuals, vibrant colors and books with texture and three-dimensionality
- Two to Three Years Old: Leaping Toward Understanding
  - Happy endings -- these books give reassurance to your child as he or she begins to experience worry or frustration in the world
  - Alphabet books -- these books will help you notice print with your child, they have predictable print in predictable places at predictable times
  - Label books - these are essential reading at this age, as words are

pouring over, through and into your child

- Four Years Old: Loving the Story
  - Folktales and fairy tales -- this genre has a powerful sense of story and story structure, be aware of the scary elements that some young four-year-olds might not be ready for
  - The Rhythms of language -- these books support the four-year-old's love of songs, poems and chants, read these aloud and clap along with their rhythms
  - Funny books -- embrace the silliness of your four-year-old, these books will help you share the magnificent humor that can be found in literature
- Five Years Old: Balancing Challenges and Comfort
  - Kindergarten books -- these books will honor the milestone of entering school, while giving your child an opportunity to express concerns and ask questions
  - Question books -- these books will help satisfy a five-year-olds desire to know the ins and outs of everything
  - Books about Making things -- at this age kids like to see how things get set up and are made, explore the process of making something together through literature
- For even more categories by age, and recommendations for each category, check your local bookstore or library for *What to Read When*, and visit the online bookstore at [WhatToReadWhen.com](http://WhatToReadWhen.com).

### **The Emotional "When" -- Reading Themes**

- The emotional "when" refers to themes that can cross age ranges and can apply to family reading experiences together
- These are themes that you want to share with your child, and also themes that preoccupy children and are felt deeply by them

#### *The 50 Themes:*

- Adoption
- Appreciating the Natural World
- A Bad Day
- Bath Time
- Becoming Someone Who Loves to Write
- Being Yourself
- Birthdays/Growing Up
- Building the World of Family
- Building, Making and Creating: The World of Mechanical Things
- Building Peace, Confronting War and Talking with Your Child About World Events
- Bullying and Hurtful People
- Caring for Someone
- Challenges and Joys of Siblings
- Complexity of Sharing
- Coping with Illness
- Courage

- Creating Community
  - Creating Theater: Making Plays and Scenes Together
  - Creativity
  - Cultivating a Sense of Time and Place
  - Death
  - Divorce
  - Falling Asleep
  - Feeling a Sense of Social Justice
  - Feelings About School
  - Feeling Silly
  - Heroes
  - Journeys
  - Learning New Things
  - Loneliness
  - Loving Art
  - Loving History
  - Loving Music
  - Loving Numbers
  - Loving Science
  - Loving Sports
  - Loving Words and Language
  - Making a Mistake
  - Making Friends
  - New Baby
  - Overcoming Adversity
  - Power of Grandparents
  - Pondering the World
  - Savoring Food
  - Spirituality
  - Separations
  - Sleepovers
  - Value of Your Imagination
  - Your Body
  - An important theme can also be anything you notice your child is wondering about, or that you'd like to talk to your child about
- For recommendations for each theme, check your local bookstore or library for *What to Read When*, or visit the online bookstore at [WhatToReadWhen.com](http://WhatToReadWhen.com).