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## Knowing about books and print

### Why is knowing about books and print important?

Before a child can begin learning to read the words on a page, he or she needs to know what a word is. Before a child can read a book, he or she needs to know how books work.

### What do children need to know before they begin to read?

Before they begin to read, children need to know some basic facts.

- Many books contain both words and pictures; it is the words that we read.
- In English, we read the words from left to right.
- We read the lines at the top of the page before reading those at the bottom.
- We usually start at the front of a book, and read until we reach the back.
- We read the left-hand page before we read the right-hand page.
- We turn the pages to continue.

### How do children learn about books and print?

Children learn a lot about books by watching adults read to them. However, children also need to try these ideas out for themselves. Long before they can read, children enjoy pretending. They will sit with a book and turn the pages just as adults do. They may make up a story or retell the story in their own words. Some children even learn stories off by heart.

#### Remember

Through playing at reading, your child is trying out ideas about books and showing you what he or she knows about reading.