

Types of Books Babies Enjoy

Books 0 to 3 month old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Cardboard books
- ❖ Simple, large pictures
- ❖ Designs with contrasting background
- ❖ Zigzag fold-out pages

Books 4 to 6 month old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Cloth and soft vinyl books
- ❖ Simple, bright pictures
- ❖ Designs with contrasting background
- ❖ Books that are easy for babies to reach and grasp

Books 7 to 9 month old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Board or block books
- ❖ Bright, bold illustrations
- ❖ Books that can be easily manipulated
- ❖ Stiff, thick pages

Books 9 to 12 month old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Cardboard books
- ❖ Pictures of familiar objects and events
- ❖ Contents of book now more important and appealing
- ❖ Books that can be easily manipulated

Books 12 to 18 month old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Theme books
- ❖ Pictures of familiar characters, objects, and events
- ❖ Books with repetitious verses or songs
- ❖ Actual stories that babies can relate to from their own experiences

Books 19 to 30 months old babies enjoy:

- ❖ Short stories that are predictable
- ❖ Illustrations with more information and action and linked with text
- ❖ Sentences that repeat and words rhyme
- ❖ Actual stories that toddlers can relate to from their own experiences

Suggestions for Reading

Suggestions for reading 0 to 3 month old babies:

- ❖ Place books along side of crib or opened wide on floor
- ❖ Position displays to allow baby to look
- ❖ Introduce babies to "book talk" language
- ❖ Recite rhymes or sing songs such as nursery rhymes

Suggestions for reading 4 to 6 month old babies:

- ❖ Allow babies to grasp and explore books with their hands and mouth
- ❖ Hold babies in lap so they can visually inspect a book
- ❖ Give baby a toy to hold, chew, and mouth while adult hold book for babies to look at
- ❖ Recite rhymes or sing songs
- ❖ Recite nursery rhymes while playing (ex: running fingers up & down infant tummy)

Suggestions for reading 7 to 9 month old babies:

- ❖ Allow babies to manipulate books (open/close, turning it around, & inserting fingers)
- ❖ While on adult's lap, let babies take book if interested. Adult can label object(s) in illustration and talk about picture
- ❖ Reading a book to babies this age consist mostly of "labeling" pictures
- ❖ Recite familiar rhymes or songs
- ❖ About 8 months of age, babies will start looking at books more and adult can "finish" reading the book. Let this phase occur naturally and don't force the issue.

Suggestions for reading 9 to 12 month old babies:

- ❖ Books can be left in play area for babies "on the move"
- ❖ Books can be read on adult's lap (during quiet times such as before a nap).
- ❖ Four part sequence suggested (Schickedanz, 1999, p. 21):
 1. Get the baby's attention.
 2. Ask the baby a labeling question.
 3. Wait for the baby to respond or if necessary, provide the answer yourself.
 4. Provide feedback.
- ❖ Provide overall language framework & fill in most of the gaps in dialogue (scaffolding)
- ❖ When child becomes older, let him/her participate more

Suggestions for reading 12 to 18 month old babies:

- ❖ Continue to "label" object(s) in illustrations
- ❖ Children will tend to repeat what adult says (or tries to)
- ❖ Add descriptive talk about objects/events pictured in books (example: name a object (cat) and while pointing to the features (soft and furry, has long tail, etc.), make meowing sounds and say, "That's what cats say when they want some milk" (Schickedanz, 1999, p. 23).
- ❖ Encourage the child to "chime in" by reciting familiar nursery rhymes and other highly predictable text

Suggestions for reading 19 to 30 month old babies:

- ❖ At this age, child can participate in reasonable, extensive conversations about a book
- ❖ Adult should relate the book's content to the child's life.
- ❖ Adult ask child open-ended questions that they can answer or respond to

Picture and Story Comprehension

1. Relates an object or an action in a book to the real world (for example, goes to get his own teddy bear after seeing a picture of one in a book). (10-14 months)
2. Selects books on the basis of content, thus demonstrating some understanding of what they are about (for example, picks up a book with a picture of a duck after playing with a toy duck; frequently selects a book that relates to a significant event in the child's own life). (10-15 months)
3. Shows a preference for a favorite page of a book by searching for it or holding the book open at that page repeatedly, as if that part is particularly well understood or appreciated. (11-14 months)
4. Performs an action that is shown or mentioned in a book (for example, wants to offer the kitten a saucer of milk after reading about it). (12-23 months)
5. Makes associations across books (for example, retrieves a book about trains or gets two books and shows the adult that they contain similar pictures or events). (20 months)
6. Shows empathy for characters or situations depicted in books (for example, pretends to cry after being told that a child in a book is sad). (16-20 months)
7. Talks about the characters and events in storybooks in ways that suggest understanding of what has been said or read. Relates events in books to his own experiences. (20-26 months)

Story-Reading Behaviors

1. Vocalizes (unintelligibly) while pointing at pictures. (7-10 months)
2. Labels pictures in familiar books. (11-14 months)
3. Uses *book babble* (that is, nonsense jabber that sounds like the child is reading rather than conversing with someone). (13-14 months)
4. Fills in the next word in the text when the adult pauses, says the next word before the adult reads it, or reads along with the adult when a highly predictable text is read. (15-28 months)
5. Pretends to read to dolls or stuffed animals and to self. (17-25 months)
6. Notices print rather than just the pictures. For example, the child points to labels under pictures as the pictures are named. (15-20 months)
7. Shows some familiarity with the text. For example, says a word or phrase that goes with a page of text as soon as he sees the illustration (for instance, says "Hush" in response to seeing a certain page of *Goodnight Moon*). (17 months)
8. Recites a part of a story's text outside of the story-reading context, for example, when swinging in a swing. (21 months)
9. Recites whole phrases from favorite stories if the adult pauses at opportune times. (24-30 months)
10. Asks to read books to adult and may be able to recite several books fairly accurately, especially if they are simple and predictable. (28-34 months)
11. Protests when an adult misreads a word in a familiar, and usually predictable, story. Typically offers the correction as well. (25-27 months)
12. Moves a finger or whole hand across a line of print and verbalizes what the text says. The rendition may be the exact text or an accurate paraphrase. (32 months)
13. Reads familiar books aloud, rendering the text very accurately, particularly when a book is predictable. (30-36 months)

Book-Handling Behaviors

1. Makes eye-contact with the pictures but does not make hand contact. (2-4 months)
2. Grasps the book and brings it to the mouth to suck and chew. Shakes, crumples, and waves the book. (5-10 months)
3. Holds cardboard books, using both hands, and manipulates the book to make the pages open and close, exploring how the book works. (6-8 months)
4. Deliberately tears paper pages, when a book with such pages is offered. (7-15 months)
5. Helps the adult reader turn the pages, pressing the page to the left after the adult has separated it from the remaining pages. (7-8 months)
6. Gives the book to an adult to read. After one reading, often takes the book, hands it back, and requests that the adult read it again. (8-10 months)
7. Sits on an adult's lap or on the floor for extended periods (10 minutes or more) to look at books. (8-10 months)
8. Shows a notable decrease in physical manipulation of books accompanied by an increase in visual attention to books. (8-12 months)
9. May tear pages accidentally due to difficulty in handling books, but much less frequently tears pages intentionally. (12-14 months)
10. Turns pages awkwardly by herself, experiencing some difficulty in separating paper pages but succeeding through persistence and effort. (8-12 months)
11. Turns pages well. (11-15 months)
12. Flips through a book by gathering a clump of pages in a hand and letting them fly past. (14-15 months)
13. Turns an inverted book right side up, or tilts his head as if trying to see the picture right side up. (11-15 months)
14. Might continue to rotate a book in an attempt to get a picture right side up when something in the picture is actually upside down. For example, if a clown is standing on her head on one page and all objects are upright on the facing page, a rotation rights one picture but inverts the other. A further rotation reverses the situation, and so on. Because an inversion problem of this kind cannot be solved, the child may become frustrated and disengage from the book. (16-20 months)
15. Recognizes the difference between a book that is oriented incorrectly (upside down) and one in which a picture on a particular page shows something that is intended to be upside down (such as a sloth hanging from the branch of a tree). Does not rotate the book, or soon stops doing so, and does not become frustrated. (24 months)

Looking and Recognition

1. Looks intently at pictures for several minutes, with wide-open eyes and thoughtful expression. (2-4 months)
2. Looking at pictures takes a back seat to bringing a book to the mouth to suck and chew. (4-6 or 7 months)
3. Hand-to-mouth manipulation subsides. Episodes of sustained looking at pictures are interspersed with hand manipulations and an occasional mouthing. (8-10 months)
4. Laughs or smiles at a familiar picture, usually when the adult makes an interesting sound or reads in an unusual way. (8-12 months)
5. Laughs or smiles when he recognizes a picture (8-12 months)
6. Points to individual pictures. (8-12 months)
7. Vocalizes while pointing to a picture. (10-12 months)
8. Points correctly to a familiar object pictured when asked, "Where's the ...?" (11-14 months)
9. Names the objects pictured (articulation may not be accurate, but parent or other caregiver can tell what the baby is trying to say). (10-14 months)
10. Makes animal noises or other appropriate sounds (e.g., *choo-choo*) when she sees the familiar animal or object pictured. (10-13 months)
11. Points to a picture and asks "What's that?" or indicates in another way ("Dat?" or questioning intonation) that a label is desired. (13-20 months)