



**10**  
**reading activities**  
**your child NEEDS to try**  
*Before ABC*

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**A child can't walk before they can stand.**

**Learning to read needs a firm foundation too!**

Like every parent, you want the best for your child. You want them to have the best possible start in life and grow up to be confident readers. But you don't know how to teach them to read, and now I've told you that reading starts before ABC. So how can you help them develop their listening and speaking skills and give them the building blocks to be confident readers later in life?

I've put together 10 activities that will help your child recognise and use sounds in ways that will give them their first steps to reading and help them develop skills that will support them for the rest of their lives. And the amazing thing? They're all things you can fit easily into your day to day life!



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# 1 – a listening moment

When you're outside, stop for 30 seconds and encourage your child to name what they can hear.

This encourages your child to break down sounds and identify each one, which will help them identify different sounds in words!

# 2 – which toy?

While you're playing with your child, describe one of their animal toys to them. 'It has four legs and a fluffy tail'.

Encourage them to find the toy and mimic the noise the toy might make.

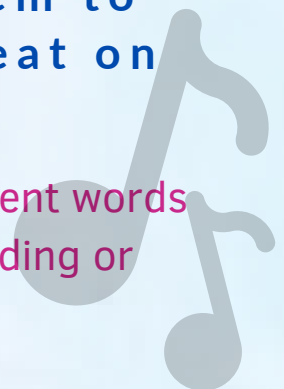
This helps children to use information to find answers, expand their vocabulary and identify different animals and their sounds.

# 3 – action songs

Developing rhythm is an important part of reading, so singing nursery rhymes with your child is actually preparing them to read! Encourage them to tap the beat on their legs as you sing.

Children will begin to recognise the length of different words which will help them to break them down when reading or writing!

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## 4 – getting dressed rhymes!

While your child is getting ready in the morning, encourage them to find rhyming words for their clothes. To begin with, give them examples - 'socks, rocks, fox' - and let them join in when they feel confident. You could even add a silly word, like 'pasta', and see if your child spots your mistake!

This helps children recognise sounds in words and explore how changing only one sound can change the whole word. They might even begin to make up words and explore how words can be fun!

## 5 – breakfast sounds

As you and your child are having breakfast, choose a word or two to put emphasis on the initial sound. 'Do you want some m-m-m-milk?' 'I have water in my c-c-cup.' Encourage your child to have a go too!

Emphasising the initial sound in a word (which is different from the first letter!) will help your child to begin to recognise that words are made up of lots of different sounds that can be broken up and put together.

## 6 – I-spy on my journey

It's an oldie but a goodie! Start with 'I spy with my little eye, something beginning with \_\_\_\_' your child then has to guess as many things beginning with that sound as they can, or until they guess what you are looking at. Give them a chance to have a go and give you a sound to guess.

I-spy helps your child to identify the first sound in the word by themselves. This will support them when identifying words in books or when beginning to write.

## 7 – voices in the park

Encourage your child to make different voice sounds while playing. For example, when going down a slide in the park, encourage them to mimic the action with their voice 'weeeee' or When playing with a ball, saying 'boing, boing'.

Experimenting with their voices will help children begin to explore their own ability to separate sounds. Later they can use this skill to break down words.

## 8 – watch my sounds

When you and your child are brushing your teeth, encourage them to make different noises and watch how their mouth changes shape. You could lead this by making sounds and challenging your child to match the sound you make by watching your mouth.

Demonstrating that sounds change when your mouth changes shape will help your child to break words down into their individual sounds. This will help with pronunciation of individual sounds when they start to learn letters.

## 9 – toy talk

Just before bed, choose a toy to ‘talk’ to you. Ask it what it wants, then sound out the answer. For example, it might want a ‘b-oo-k’ or a ‘h-u-g’. Encourage your child to explain what the toy wants.

Blending sounds into understandable words will help your child when they start to read. They will be able to recognise words based on the sounds they say!

# 10 – be the Primary Educator!

Spending time with your child is the most valuable learning experience that you can give them. Children learn so much from the adults around them and the support they are given has a profound effect on their education.

Your child's primary educator will always be you. You helped them take their first steps, now help them take their first steps into reading.

If you'd like to learn more about how I can help you do this, click the button below and check out my website. I'm passionate about enabling parents to support their children throughout every stage of reading, from before ABC to being a confident 'free reader'. I'd love to help you and your child achieve that too.

**How to teach your  
child to read**

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