

## Understanding Social Development of Infants

## Section 8-2

# Reading to Infants

It is never too early to start reading to a child. Many people believe that children don't begin to learn to read and write until they enter school. However, research shows that children get ready to read and write by learning to enjoy books. Their first experiences with books can start even when they are young infants.

### WHAT READING TEACHES BABIES

Reading to a baby stimulates the baby's brain in a variety of ways. These include:

- **Book handling.** Even before babies can turn pages, they enjoy handling books. Because babies usually try to put books in their mouths, plastic cloth, or heavy cardboard "board" books, are good choices for infants who are first exploring books. Between the ages of 12 and 18 months, they learn to turn books right side up and begin to turn the pages of board books themselves.
- **Picture recognition.** Pointing to pictures and naming objects in the pictures helps babies learn to identify things. As babies get older, finding objects in pictures can become a game.
- **Sound recognition.** Babies soon begin to imitate the sounds they hear the reader make. This speeds their language development and prepares the way for them to understand that letters on the page represent sounds.
- **Books are fun!** Perhaps the most important thing that reading teaches infants is that books are interesting and enjoyable.

### CHOOSING APPROPRIATE BOOKS

While it is beneficial to read to a baby, exactly what is read isn't that important. Simply hearing the rise and fall of language, and being held, are what is important.

As babies grow and become more aware of what is being read, content counts more. Most infants aren't able to sit and listen to a long story, so short books with lots of pictures are good choices. Sometimes you can talk about the pictures instead of actually reading the text.

Here are some other points to keep in mind when choosing books for babies:

- Look for books with simple texts that are predictable and include familiar things. They also like pictures of faces.
- Make homemade books that have pictures of the child and other family members.
- Books about food, animals, or other children are interesting to most young children.
- Books with rhymes help children learn to distinguish sounds.
- Books with textures that the baby can feel or with flaps to manipulate help stimulate the baby's senses.

Reading to infants helps develop a love of books and the enjoyment of reading. Research shows that children who have had books read to them are better prepared to learn to read and are more eager to want to learn to read.

## Taking Action

Visit a library or bookstore and choose two books that you think would be appropriate for a one-year-old child. List the authors and titles of the two books and explain why you think they are good choices.

**Child Development 2014-15**

**Children's Book Assignment**

Visit the library (public, school, or home) and select a children's book that you are not familiar with. Write a paragraph explaining why this book would be suitable for a baby (no more than one year old). Make at least 3 connections based on information learned in class. This must be typed or neatly hand written. Bring the book to class on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup> and be prepared to briefly share it with the class.

Due on: Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>

Assignment turned in on time	10 (2 points lost per day)
Book & participation on April 6 <sup>th</sup>	10
Mechanics (grammar, spelling, etc.)	20
At least 3 connections with class material	30
Total:	70 points