

# • Together Time •



Read Together 20  
Minutes Every Day™

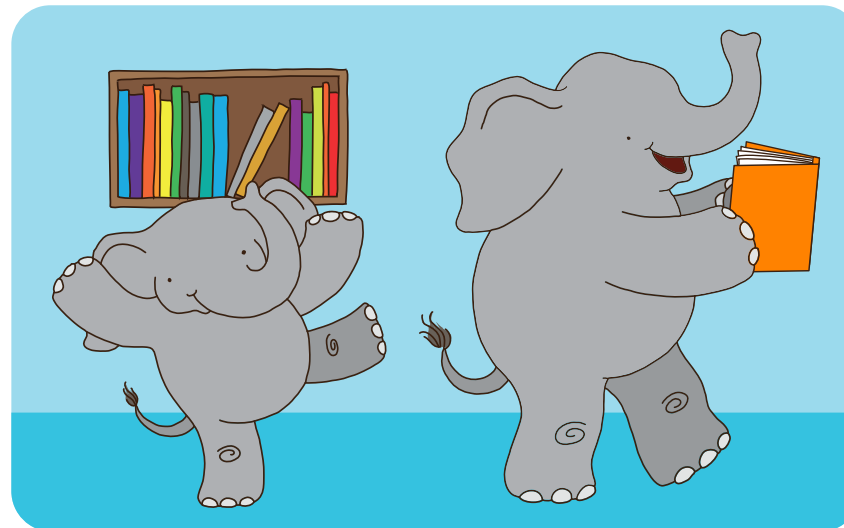
## Use Your Whole Body

Grab your child's favorite book and start reading a page as you walk a straight line. Stop for a second every time there is a comma. Stop for two seconds when you reach a period. Turn 90 degrees every time you turn the page. Jump in excitement if there's an exclamation mark at the end of a sentence. Show a puzzled face when there is a question mark. Get the point? Have fun using your whole body as you read with your child!

Reading on your couch or at bedtime? Point to the commas and pause. Point to the periods and pause for a bit longer. Show enthusiasm and curiosity with the exclamation and question marks. Encourage your child to imitate you. They are learning punctuation as you read together this way – something they will remember forever.

## Pages, Letters, Words, Oh My

As adults, we take print concepts and punctuation marks for granted. However, young readers need to understand concepts such as a book, cover, first page, last page, first sentence, last sentence, among many others. These print concepts are very abstract things to master, so here are a few more tips you can use to help your little one develop print awareness.



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- Before starting to read, explore what is on the cover of the book. Talk about the colors of the illustration with babies. Talk about the author's name and, with older children, also the name of the illustrator. Some books may also include the name of the translator, which can lead to a conversation about different languages with more experienced readers.
- Announce that you will read the first page. Start reading and pause after the first paragraph. Show your child where you stopped reading and ask if he wants you to continue with the next paragraph. Older children will be delighted to compare the length of the sentences and paragraphs.
- Point out the fact that when your book is open, you are reading the left page first, then the right page. Also, that you read from top to bottom and from left to right.
- If your child is interested in print, show how some words start with the same letter as their name and how some words are short while others are very long. Want to explore books more deeply? Classify the words with older children: "This is a noun. Let's find more nouns."

Research shows that print awareness is a strong predictor for future success in reading. By practicing these simple and fun strategies, you will help your child master print concepts and become a reader.