# Developmental Milestones of Early Literacy

## Motor

### 6 TO 12 MONTHS
- reaches for book
- puts book in mouth
- sits in lap, head steady
- turns pages with adult help

### 12 TO 18 MONTHS
- sits without support
- may carry book
- holds book with help
- turns board pages, several at a time
- no longer puts book in mouth right away

### 18 TO 24 MONTHS
- turns board book pages easily, one at a time
- carries book around the house
- may use book as transitional object (e.g. at bedtime)

### 24 TO 36 MONTHS
- learns to handle paper pages
- goes back and forth in books to find favorite pictures

### 3 YEARS AND UP
- competent book handling
- turns paper pages one at a time

## Cognitive

### 6 TO 12 MONTHS
- looks at pictures
- vocalizes, pats pictures
- prefers pictures of faces

### 12 TO 18 MONTHS
- points at pictures with one finger
- may make same sound for particular picture (labels)
- points when asked, “where’s...?”
- turns book right side up
- gives book to adult to read

### 18 TO 24 MONTHS
- names familiar pictures
- fills in words in familiar stories
- “reads” to stuffed animals or dolls
- recites parts of familiar stories
- attention span highly variable

### 24 TO 36 MONTHS
- recites whole phrases, sometimes whole stories
- coordinates text with picture
- protests when adult gets a word wrong in a familiar story
- reads familiar books to self

### 3 YEARS AND UP
- listens to longer stories
- can retell familiar story
- understands what text is
- moves finger along text
- "writes" name
- moves toward letter recognition

## What Parents Can Do

### 6 TO 12 MONTHS
- hold child comfortably
- follow baby’s cues for “more” and “stop”
- point and name pictures
- sing and talk to your baby

### 12 TO 18 MONTHS
- respond to child’s prompting to read
- let the child control the book
- be comfortable with toddler’s short attention span
- ask “where’s the...?” and let child point

### 18 TO 24 MONTHS
- relate books to child’s experiences
- use books in routines, bedtimes
- ask “what’s that?” and give child time to answer
- pause and let child complete the sentence

### 24 TO 36 MONTHS
- keep using books in routines
- read at bedtime
- be willing to read the same story over and over
- ask “what’s that?”
- relate books to child’s experiences
- provide crayons and paper

### 3 YEARS AND UP
- ask “what’s happening?”
- encourage writing and drawing
- let child tell the story

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**Reach Out and Read**

56 Roland Street, Suite 100D • Boston, MA 02129
P 617-455-0600 • F 617-455-0601 • info@reachoutandread.org

reachoutandread.org