



Reading

Reading is one of the best ways to help children become good readers later in life. When you read wonderful, funny, exciting stories to your child, they are more likely to want to learn to read by themselves when they go to school. Reading also helps them learn new words, connect words and pictures, and follow a story from beginning to end.

Read all the time

- ★ Make reading a fun, interactive, and special time together.
- ★ Let your child choose the books they want you to read together.
- ★ Read favourite books more than once and ask questions as you read.
- ★ Point out and read printed items around you such as food labels, street signs, and shopping lists.

About *The Reading Tree*

Vancouver Public Library is pleased to offer this free picture book to Vancouver families with young children. Reading aloud to children is one of the best ways adults can support the growth of language and literacy in the early years, and the library is proud to be a supporter of children's success.

Message from Vancouver Coastal Health

What a wonderful and important book! From day one, a child's brain begins forming connections very quickly. Promoting early literacy is a critical building block in child development that has life-long effects on health and well-being. This book is a fun and interactive way for parents to encourage their child's initial exploration in the world of literacy, beautifully illustrating that it involves so much more than the written word. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did!

Dr. Reka Gustafson, Medical Health Officer

About this Guide

Early literacy includes all that children know and learn about reading and writing before they can actually read and write. This guide offers information and activities for you and your child to enjoy and develop early literacy skills together.

Did you know?

Research shows that children start to become literate long before they learn to read. As parents and caregivers, you already include many early literacy activities in your child's daily life. You can support your young child's early literacy growth now by talking, singing, playing, writing, and reading together.

The Library Can Help

With locations across Vancouver, the library offers many resources to support you in talking, singing, playing, writing and reading with your child.

★ Books, music, movies, and more

Borrow picture books, music and movies to read, listen to and watch at home. The library's collection also has books in many different languages and many different formats – physical, digital, and audio. Browse the collection: www.vpl.ca

★ Storytimes, family events, and more

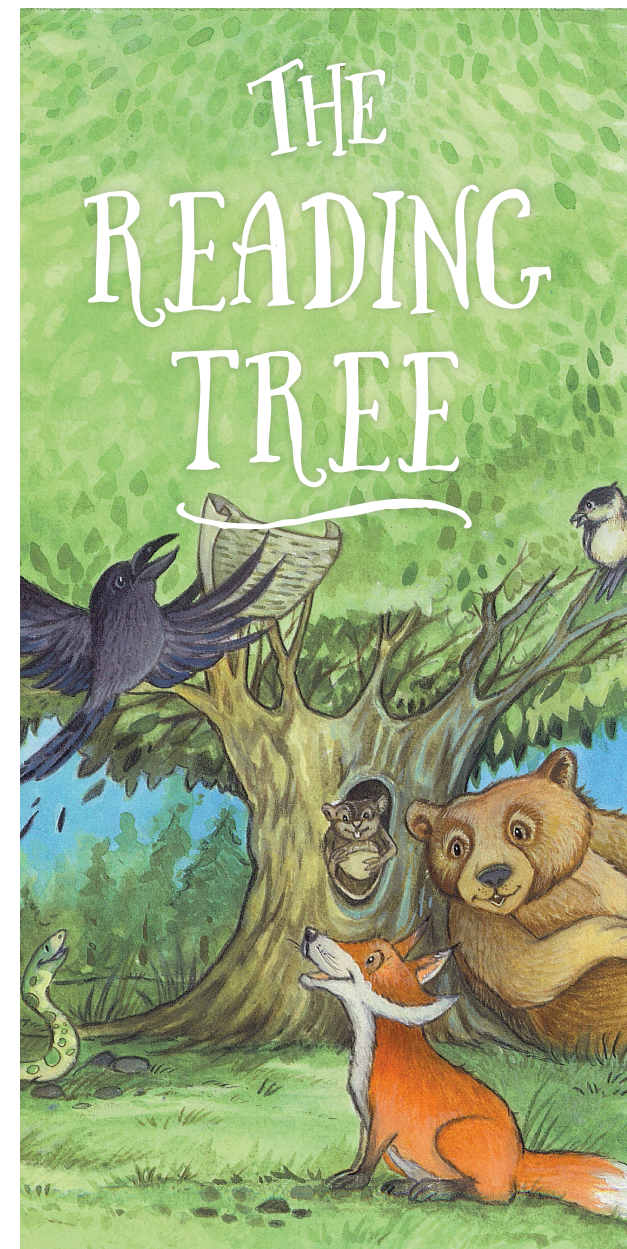
Have fun together at a wide range of creative, educational, and fun programs such as storytimes, STEM activities, and more. The library also offers workshops for parents and caregivers to help support early literacy at home. See the events calendar: www.vpl.ca/events

★ Library staff

Library staff can answer your questions, help your whole family sign up for free library cards, and connect you with the best materials and services for you and your child. Find a branch: www.vpl.ca/hours-locations

★ Questions?

Visit www.vpl.ca or contact us at info@vpl.ca or 604.331.3603.



A Guide for Parents and Caregivers





Talking

Children begin to learn language from the time they are born. By seeing and hearing others speak with words or sign language, children learn new words and valuable information about the world around them.

Talk about anything

- ★ Talk to your child about what is happening around you – even if they can't talk or sign back, they will begin to recognize the words you use and understand them.
- ★ Communicate in the language you are most comfortable with, including sign language.
- ★ When your child babbles, gestures or speaks, acknowledge them and respond.
- ★ Add details to what your child tells you and use descriptive words.



Singing

Singing slows down language and helps children hear the different sounds of words. Breaking down words into sounds and syllables helps children with reading later on.

Start singing and rhyming

- ★ Sing favourite songs and say rhymes in the language you know best.
- ★ Sing songs from your family's culture.
- ★ Sing along to your favourite kinds of music.
- ★ Match songs and rhymes with your daily routines such as eating, changing diapers, and getting ready for bed.



Playing

Playing helps children practice communication and storytelling skills while having fun. By using their imagination to make up stories during play, children practice new vocabulary and test their understanding of how the world works.

Play, move, and imagine

- ★ Give your child plenty of chances to play, move their body, and stretch their imagination.
- ★ Use cardboard boxes, paper tubes, and pots and pans as tools for imaginative play.
- ★ Let your child take the lead when you play together.
- ★ Encourage your child to play-act books and stories using toys and other objects you have at home.



Writing

Writing begins with children scribbling and making marks on paper. Any activity your child does with their arms, hands, and fingers will help develop fine motor skills. Scribbling with crayons, playing with dough, and picking up small objects are just a few activities that can help develop the coordination needed for learning to write.

Start small

- ★ At mealtime, encourage your child to pick up small pieces of food to feed themselves.
- ★ Give your child blocks, balls, and other objects to move and roll.
- ★ Write your child's name together and help them learn each letter.
- ★ Write down a story that your child tells you, and then read it back together.