

The Road to Reading

Gwynne Spencer

Here are the basic stages of literacy development that all kids go through on their way to loving books for a lifetime!

Birth to three months

Gazing at bright colorful pictures in board books

Learning to maintain focus on a two dimensional page

Loves pictures of babies

Three Months to Seven Months

Chewing on board books, slobbering on pages

Nine Months to a Year and a Half

Playing "peek a boo" when the pages open and close

Grabbing pages and scrunching them in hand

Learning to turn pages

Kissing books

Eleven Months

Making animal noises when they see the critters

Nursery Rhymes and other "patterned" language like Brown Bear

One Year

Playing with "Pat the Bunny"

Books that "do" things

Fourteen Months

Naming things from picture dictionaries

Eighteen Months

Listening to "Goodnight Moon"

Two Years

Learning Mother Goose Rhymes and loving Dr. Seuss

Boys fall in love with truck books

Two and a Half

Hearing picture books with one sentence to a page (Quick as a Cricket)

Reads for longer and longer time- up to twenty minutes

Loves stories about animals, one or two sentences to a page

Three years

Enjoying stories from folklore like Three Bears, Three Pigs, Three Billy Goats Gruff (animal protagonists)

Loves longer stories like Madeline, Make Way for Ducklings, as well as collections of stories from which they can choose

Three and a Half

Encountering scary nightmares and being helped past them with books like "Where the Wild Things Are" and "There's A Nightmare in my Closet"

Four

Wanting to hear really scary fairy tales where horrible terrible things happen to children at the hands of adults and the children prevail. (Grownups should read "The Uses of Enchantment" and "Touch Magic" for more on this topic.)
Longer stories with lots of detailed pictures (esp. Jan Brett)

Four and a Half

Hungering for books about the real world, real people, new places, new ideas presented in books.

Five

Listening to Short Chapter Books like "Frog and Toad" and "Mouse Soup" as a first encounter with bookmarks.

Enjoying Dinosaur books.

Six

Cherishing Beautiful books.

Loving science, real world, true books

Seven

Independently reading Beginning readers like "Step into Reading" and "Cat in the Hat" books. Large print. One line=one sentence.

Savoring Joke books

Laughing while reading Silly books like "The Stupids" and "Rotten Ralph"; great poetry like Jack Prelutsky writes

Browsing Picture encyclopedias, science books, eyewitness books

Enjoying Fairy tales, again.

Beautiful books, again.

Loving Scary stories. Really scary.

Eight

Asking for Funny books like "How to Eat Fried Worms", short chapters, short text,

picture support.

Reading, on their own, Chapter books, with gusto

Boxcar series

American Girls

Junie B. Jones

Nine

Junk Food Stage

Far Side

Comics

Trading Cards

Garfield

Magazines

Funny poetry like Jack Prelutsky

Not much on a page

Funny stories

Waldo

Ten

Goosebumps, Babysitters and other series.

Mysteries

Magazines

Sports

Horse series

Very author loyal

Eleven

Science fiction and Fantasy

Horses, dogs, unicorns, dragons

Still loyal to series, will read adult fantasy, fiction

Will read books recommended with enthusiasm by adults

Twelve

The D's--death, divorce, disease, disaster

Biography

Sports

Horror

Sex and Plumbing

Books about appearance, self, personality types

All ages

Nonfiction

Encyclopedias

Dictionaries

Thesauruses

Bathroom reading

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