

TIPS FOR READING WITH THE VERY YOUNG

BY JACK PRELUTSKY

Dear Parents,

A long time ago, when I was a little boy, years before I went to school, my mother read to me. I loved listening to fairy tales like Little Red Riding Hood, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and Hansel and Gretel. I loved books like *The Little Engine That Could*, but most of all, I loved poems. There was something special about rhyme and meter that sunk in and became part of me. I have no doubt that my lifelong love of literature grew out of those early precious moments with my mother.

Still, my mother only knew a few poems by heart and, except for a Mother Goose Collection and Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, we had no books that contained more than one or two poems. Also, we didn't have a car, and the library was a very long walk away, so we were seldom able to go there. I sometimes wished that my family owned a giant book of poems written especially for me.

That's what I tried to do by creating Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young – an anthology of delightful poems for children from ages six months or so, to six years or so. Although it includes many old favorites, I also combed through hundreds and hundreds of books to find lesser known, delightful little gems. The poems are on themes that very young children can relate to, such as nature, bedtime, animals, weather, food, the world of make-believe, and of course, children's own thoughts and feelings. Many of the poems mimic the experiences children have as they discover the real world around them.

The tips that follow are well designed to help you share these poems with even the youngest child. These are the early building blocks to a lifetime of reading and special memories that your child will remember forever.



Jack Prelutsky



Some Tips

The first few years of a child's life are extremely important to their emotional and intellectual growth. Reading to your child during these vital years is an essential tool to provide a nurturing and language-enriched environment. In *Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young*, I have selected short poems with wonderful sounds to keep even the youngest child entertained while acknowledging their short attention spans.



MAKE READING A DAILY PRACTICE - A SPECIAL TIME FOR BOTH OF YOU TO LOOK FORWARD TO.

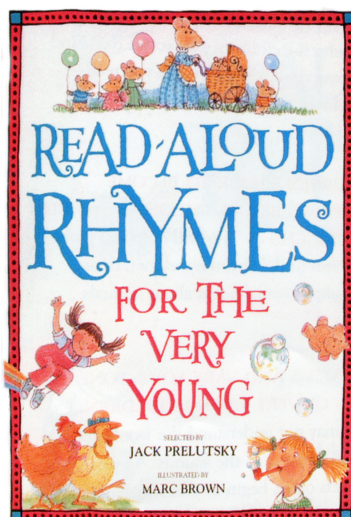
It could be during the afternoon to provide quiet quality time, or perhaps right before bedtime to calm the child after an active day. Find a special place in your home to sit together while you read-snuggling together while listening to a parent read makes the child feel safe, loved and happy.

READ THROUGH THE WHOLE BOOK TO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE POEMS BEFORE CHOOSING WHICH ONE TO READ TO YOUR CHILD.

This will help you pick the perfect poem that relates to the day, the weather, or an upcoming event- for example, read a poem about animals before visiting the zoo.

CHOOSE RHYTHMIC POEMS AND VARY YOUR TONE TO KEEP THE ATTENTION OF VERY YOUNG CHILDREN.

While they may not understand words yet, they will respond to the sounds. As your child gets older, begin to encourage your child to repeat the words you read to them. Point out the pictures that relate to what you are reading. If they start enjoying a particular poem you may look into other books by that poet.



Read-Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young is a vibrant anthology compiled by America's favorite poet and anthologist, Jack Prelutsky. He has selected more than 200 poems for every moment a young child encounters. Each poem is brought to life in the bright, playful illustrations of award-winning artist Marc Brown.