

# Feed Me a Story!

DOES IT REALLY MATTER IF I READ TO MY CHILD EVERY DAY?

*Yes,* if daily reading for 30 minutes a day begins at birth, by the time the child is 5 years old, he or she has been fed roughly 900 hours of brain food!

Reduce that to just 30 minutes a week, and the child enters kindergarten with just 130 hours. The child's hungry mind loses over 770 hours of nursery rhymes, songs, and stories.

*No teacher,* no matter how talented, can make up for those lost hours of mental nourishment.

You want me to read to my child for 30 minutes a day. How in the world can I do that? **I don't have time!**

*The good news* is that much of what you already do every day can be brain food. See the reverse for good ideas on how to fit your child's 30 minutes in every day.

# 30 minutes of brain food everyday

The thought of reading to your child for 30 minutes can feel overwhelming. But “reading” for infants and small children involves talking, singing, naming things, telling stories out loud as well as reading books. Here’s how to fit it all in:

## *In the morning...*

Sing a good morning song to your child	1 minute
Talk about the clothes that your child will wear	2 minutes
“Read” a thermometer to see what the temperature is	1 minute
Play “This Little Piggy” while putting on socks	1 minute
Name parts of your body or things in the room	1 minute
Read the cereal box (milk carton, etc.) at breakfast	2 minutes
Think of all the words that rhyme with “milk” or “egg”	2 minutes
Read the bus schedule/school schedule to get information	1 minute

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TOTAL 11 minutes

## *During the day...*

Sing “Old MacDonald” while walking to school	2 minutes
Read all of the store and street signs on the way to school	5 minutes
Bring a book to read while riding on the bus	3 minutes
Ask your child’s teacher/caregiver to read to your child	5 minutes

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TOTAL 15 minutes

## *In the evening...*

Read the TV Guide to find out when your shows are on	1 minute
Cuddle with your child and point at the pictures in a book	2 minutes
Sing a lullaby to your child at bedtime	1 minute

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TOTAL 4 minutes

This gives you a total of 30 minutes of reading activities a day!

## *Other ideas:*

- Tell your child about what it was like when you were little
- Make up a story about a bunny who loves to make friends
- Have your child “read” a book to you