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Ages and Stages of Reading Development – Second Grade

Your second grader is coming into his own as an independent reader. You might notice your child reading aloud smoothly or reading silently to himself. You will also see your child's reading preferences emerge as he begins reading for pleasure. This is a critical time for you to help your child read and write with greater ease and confidence. Praise your child's reading and writing efforts, allow him to pick his own books, correct his errors only when he asks for help, and be understanding if he becomes bored with a book and wants to stop reading it. This will help your second grader become a better reader and writer who is willing to take risks.

Milestones

Your second grader should:

- Have a system that she uses when the meaning of a sentence or paragraph is not clear (such as rereading or questioning);
- Enjoy reading fiction and nonfiction for interest and information;
- Use common letter patterns and letter-sound relationships to spell words;
- Punctuate simple sentences correctly and check her own work for errors;
- Show signs of a growing vocabulary. This includes using language rules when speaking and writing (such as using past and present correctly);
- Prepare simple school assignments such as book reports, short stories, and poems.

You can try this:

- Talk to your child about the books she is reading. Ask her to tell you why she likes a certain book or story. Talk about the language, characters, and plot of the story.
- Read for information. Read maps, graphs, charts, bus schedules and recipes together. Learning how to read these types of tools is an important life skill.
- Encourage your child to keep a journal. It could be a diary for personal thoughts, a journal in which she writes about books she is reading, or a "dialog journal" the two of you can keep, in which you "talk" to each other by writing notes.
- Let your child see you reading! It doesn't matter if it's a novel, newspaper, or magazine, it is important to remember that you are your child's first and most important role model.
- This is a good time to introduce fun board games that involve making up words!
- Become involved in school activities and communicate often with your child's teacher. This lets your child know you value education.

When choosing books for your second grader look for:

- Books that will challenge but not frustrate your child;
- Fiction and nonfiction books that reflect your child's interests or school work;
- Stories that develop strong characters and memorable plots;
- Books that paint a realistic view of the world and stress growing-up themes;
- Favorite characters, authors, and illustrators that your child has previously enjoyed;
- Books that introduce new vocabulary words.