



# Fun with words

**Add to your child's repertoire of words through easy - and enjoyable - activities you can do at home.**

**V**ocabulary is the foundation for learning any language. What's more, it is also linked to many other aspects of your child's development. Various psychological studies have shown that a child's vocabulary is strongly linked to his reading comprehension, intelligence and subsequent levels of achievement.

During the first few years of your child's life, everyday people, objects and activities (daddy, mummy, bottle, nap, etc) provide plenty of ways to introduce new words. But as your child grows older and begins to learn to read, vocabulary development is crucial.

Vocabulary consists of two parts — receptive vocabulary (which are the words that your child understands) and expressive vocabulary (which are the words that he uses to communicate).

Building both expressive and receptive vocabulary is simple — get your child reading and talking more. Here are a few tips to get started:



**Read more** One way to get your child reading is to make reading part of his daily routine — get in the habit of reading your child a story before his bedtime.

Pick books written about topics he is interested in; take him to the library and let him choose what appeals to him.

Also, don't just read to your child, but read *with* your child. While reading to him, encourage him to repeat sentences or difficult words, or take turns reading sentences. Gently correct him if he makes a mistake, but keep your attitude fun and light so that reading time remains enjoyable.

Lastly, make reading easy and fun — stock your shelves with age-appropriate books from the library, or



try a few word games instead. If your kid loves to watch TV, turn on the subtitles if you can — this way your child will also get lots of reading practice!



### Talk more

Talk is also an effective

way to build vocabulary. Whenever you can, try to narrate what you are doing to your child. If you're baking, for example, talk him through the steps: "Mummy is measuring the flour, and then she's going to weigh the butter. Now, Mummy is mixing the ingredients together with this whisk."

But don't just talk at your child though, it's also important to talk to your child. Ask him how his day at kindergarten or pre-school was. Get him to tell you about his friends — try to ask open-ended questions

## ONE WORD AT A TIME



Here are four simple steps from the reading advocacy website **Reading Rockets** ([www.readingrockets.org](http://www.readingrockets.org)) that will help when encountering new words.

1

**PROVIDE A CLEAR AND SIMPLE DEFINITION FOR THE NEW WORD.**

>> 'Tiny' means something is really, really small.



# WHAT TO READ?

So many books, so little time!  
National Library Board librarians  
recommend these two top favourites:

## ➤ JOSEPH HAD A LITTLE OVERCOAT

By Tabback, S.  
New York: Viking ©1999  
Call Number: JP TAB  
Available in all  
NLB libraries

Joseph has a worn out overcoat. He does not want to throw it away, so he reuses and recycles it into other things. A repetitive story with die-cut holes that shows what the innovative Joseph has made out of his old clothing. An excellent story about recycling and reusing old materials.



## ➤ TODAY I FEEL SILLY & OTHER MOODS THAT MAKE MY DAY

By Jamie Lee Curtis  
New York: HarperCollins  
Publishers ©1998  
Call Number: JP CUR  
Available in all  
NLB libraries

Follow a little girl as she explores her feelings going through her daily life. Children will relate to the many emotions she goes through and learn to identify their own feelings, as her emotions are described. The watercolour illustrations capture the volatility of the little girl's moods, with colours that reflect the for anger to brown for loneliness. The book includes a mood wheel on the last page that allows children to change the girl's expression.



Check on the availability of these titles via the library's online catalogue at [www.nlb.sg](http://www.nlb.sg).

that don't require a yes/  
no answer to encourage  
him to elaborate. Before you know  
it, you will be having a shared sustained  
conversation with your child. ♥

2

### RELATE IT TO SOMETHING FAMILIAR.

>> Remember that baby frog we saw at the zoo? It was such a tiny frog!



3

### ASK YOUR CHILD TO THINK OF HIS OWN EXAMPLE.

>> Can you think of something tiny we saw today? That's right, the ants on the sidewalk were tiny!

4

### PRACTISE, PRACTISE, PRACTISE.

>> Try and use the new word as often as you can.

