

The Winter Holidays are a Time for Sharing...Good **Books**

The holiday season is upon us and children will be wide-eyed and full of excitement. What better time to snuggle up in front of a fire or under the covers and share a wonderful book with your child? Remember the spinning dreidel and visions of sugar plum fairies? You can give your child similar memories by reading to them during the holidays. As you read together, you will also learn about your child's unique book preferences. This will help you select books to give as presents. Remember, "*a book is a present you can open over and over again.*"

The following tips will help you and your child look forward to reading together:

Don't over emphasize the "correctness" in reading the book. (Relax. Have fun!)

Unless your child misreads words to the point where the story can no longer be understood, don't correct them. Even skilled adult readers occasionally misread individual words without realizing it. As long as the meaning of the story is still clear, you needn't break the rhythm and flow by focusing on correctness.

Remember that even small amounts of time reading together are worthwhile. (It's the little things that count.)

Don't worry if your family schedule doesn't allow for more than ten or fifteen minutes of daily reading. Just be sure to read on a regular basis so that your child sees reading as a cherished activity.

Read books that extend the story over days and weeks. (Keep them guessing!)

Even young children can enjoy adventures in chapter books. If you do read a lengthy story, make sure you take time before the day's reading to discuss with your child what has happened in the story so far.

Don't be afraid to abandon a book. (There are many to choose from.)

Some of the most wonderful books don't lend themselves to oral reading, or won't suit you or your child's tastes. All good readers occasionally abandon a book. Choose another book you both will enjoy together.

Don't be afraid to reread a book. (The more the merrier!)

Children love rhythms, and repetitions. Though it may drive *you* nuts to read a book for the fourteenth time, many children enjoy reading through one book many times. Start a collection of holiday books and make a special point of adding to the collection each year. Create a winter holiday tradition of reading your family's favorites together.