

PLAY!  
together!



# Help your child get

# Ready **2** Read!

## PLAY together

Children learn a lot about language through play. Play helps children think symbolically, so they understand that spoken and written words can stand for real objects and experiences. A ruler becomes a magic wand, for instance, or a playmate becomes an astronaut exploring space. Play also helps children express themselves and put thoughts into words.

- Give your child plenty of playtime. Some of the best kinds of play are unstructured, when children can use their imaginations and create stories about what they're doing.
- Encourage dramatic play. When children make up stories using puppets or stuffed animals, they develop important narrative skills. This helps children understand that stories and books have a beginning, middle, and end.
- Pretend to read a book. Have your child tell you a story based on the pictures in a book. Or ask your child to "read" a book you've read together many times and tell you the story. This develops vocabulary and other language skills.



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