



Ten read-aloud commandments.....

1. Spend at least ten wildly happy minutes *every single day* reading aloud.
2. Read at least *three stories a day*: it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear a thousand stories before they can begin to learn to read.
3. *Read aloud with animation*. Listen to your own voice and don't be dull, or flat, or boring. Hang loose and be loud, have fun and laugh a lot.
4. *Read with joy and enjoyment*: real enjoyment for yourself and great joy for the listeners.
5. Read the stories that the kids love, *over and over and over again*, and always read in the same 'tune' for each book: i.e. with the same intonations on each page, each time.
6. Let children hear lots of language by *talking to them constantly* about the pictures, or anything else connected to the book; or sing any old song that you can remember; or say nursery rhymes in a bouncy way; or be noisy together doing clapping games.
7. Look for *rhyme, rhythm or repetition* in books for young children, and make sure the books are really short.
8. *Play games* with the things that you and the child can see on the page, such as letting kids finish rhymes, and finding the letters that start the child's name and yours, remembering that it's never work, it's always a fabulous game.
9. Never ever *teach* reading, or get tense around books.
10. Please read aloud every day, mums and dads, because you just love being with your child, not because *it's the right thing to do*.

Must-have classics

For Australian children aged from birth to four

The world and I could argue forever about what's left off this list. Hundreds of other great books exist. These fail-safe, tried-and-true suggestions are merely for parents who need a little guidance before they bravely choose books on their own.

1. *I Went Walking* by Sue Machin
2. *Each Peach Pear Plum* by Allan Ahlberg
3. *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What do you See?* by Bill Martin Jr
4. *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss
5. *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman
6. *Where the Wild Things Are* by Maurice Sendak
7. *Where's Spot?* by Eric Hill
8. *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle
9. *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell
10. *Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy* by Lynley Dodd
11. *Rascal the Dragon* by Paul Jennings
12. *Madeline* by Ludwig Bemelmans
13. *Wombat Stew* by Marcia K. Vaughan
14. *Who Sank the Boat?* by Pamela Allen
15. *Dr. Seuss's ABC* by Dr. Seuss
16. *Dear Zoo* by Rod Campbell
17. *Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michel Rosen
18. *Rosie's Walk* by Pat Hutchins
19. *The Elephant and the Bad Baby* by Elfrida Vipont
20. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* by Judith Viorst

