

National Reading Month Activities

Activity 1: Cozy Read-In

Best for: all ages 0–5

Time: 10–20 minutes

Set-up

- Blanket/pillows + basket of board books and picture books
- Optional: stuffed animal “reading buddy”

How to do it

1. Teach a simple routine: “**Choose** → **Sit** → **Read** → **Turn pages gently.**”
2. Read one short story aloud.
3. Let children look at books independently or with an adult nearby.
4. Close with: “Show me your favorite picture.”

Adaptations

- **Infants (0–12 months):** 1–2 board books, point and label: “dog,” “ball.”
- **1–2 years:** ask: “Where is the ____?” and let them point.
- **2–3 years:** “What happened?” (single word answers are fine).
- **3–5 years:** “What was your favorite part? Why?”



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Activity 2: Story Basket (Props + Retell)

Best for: 1–5 (infants can explore safe props with supervision)

Time: 10–20 minutes

Materials

A basket with safe props that match a story (felt pieces, puppet, toy animal, scarf).

How to do it

1. Read the book once.
2. Show the basket: “These help us remember the story!”
3. Model: “First... then... last...” using props.
4. Children use props to retell.

Prompts by age

- **1–2:** “Find the cat!” “More?” “All done?”
- **2–3:** “Show me what happened.”
- **3–5:** “Who was in the story? Where were they?”

Activity 3: Picture Walk (No-Pressure Reading)

Best for: all ages 0–5

Time: 8–15 minutes



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How to do it

1. Flip through pages before reading.
2. Pause and name what you see.
3. Ask one question per page (or just label for infants).
4. Read the story after the picture walk.

Easy questions

- “What do you see?”
 - “How do they feel?”
 - “What do you think happens next?” (preschool)
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Activity 4: Read-Aloud + Movement (Act It Out!)

Best for: 1–5

Time: 10–15 minutes

How to do it

Pick a story with actions and repeat these cues:

- **Jump** (happy)
- **Tiptoe** (sneaky)
- **Stomp** (big steps)
- **Freeze** (stop and listen)



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Management tip

Use a signal: “Hands on head = freeze.”

Adaptations

- **1–2:** copy one motion at a time.
 - **2–3:** act out one scene.
 - **3–5:** take turns being the “movement leader.”
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Activity 5: “We Read Today!” Sticker Tracker

Best for: all ages 0–5

Time: 2–5 minutes daily

Set-up

Create a simple poster:

- A big **book**, **tree**, or **heart** shape
- Each day you read, add **one sticker**.

Extensions for preschool

- Count stickers together.
 - Ask: “Are we close to our goal?”
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Activity 6: Favorite Book Vote (Simple + Fair)



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Best for: toddlers and preschool (2–5)

Time: 10–15 minutes

How to do it

1. Show 2 book covers.
2. Children vote:
 - sticker under the cover, or
 - place a cube in a cup
3. Count together and read the winner.

Adaptations

- **2–3:** count votes up to 5.
 - **3–5:** “Which has more? Which has fewer?”
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Activity 7: Retell Art

Best for: 2–5

Time: 10–20 minutes

Toddler version (2–3)

- “Draw your favorite part.”

Preschool version (3–5)

- Use 3 boxes: **Beginning / Middle / End**



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- Children draw what happened.
 - Optional dictation: adult writes child's words.
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Activity 8: Character Feelings (SEL + Literacy)

Best for: 1–5

Time: 8–12 minutes

Materials (optional)

Feeling faces (happy, sad, mad, scared)

How to do it

After reading, ask:

- “How did the character feel?”
- “What helped them feel better?”

Adaptations

- **1–2:** choose a feeling face.
 - **2–3:** “Why?” (one-word answers okay)
 - **3–5:** “What would you do to help?”
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Age Group Quick Guide (0–Preschool)



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Infants (0–12 months)

- 1–2 board books for 3–5 minutes
- point, label, pause for baby sounds
- let baby touch and explore sturdy pages

Young Toddlers (1–2 years)

- repeat favorite books often
- point-and-name, animal sounds
- simple questions: “Where is ____?”

Toddlers (2–3 years)

- act out 1–2 actions
- “first/next” with pictures
- retell using props

Preschool (3–5 years)

- prediction: “What will happen next?”
- beginning/middle/end drawings
- simple book vote and counting



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