

## Did you know ...



Vocabulary is knowing the names of things and ideas. Most children enter school knowing several thousand words. Developing a strong vocabulary helps your child as they learn to read.

When you think about it, you know that you are reading a word correctly if you have heard it before. The more words children hear, the more ready they will be to make connections between sounding out words, knowing they are pronouncing them correctly, and understanding what the words mean.

**The best way to help your child build vocabulary is to talk and read with them.**

## Here's how ...

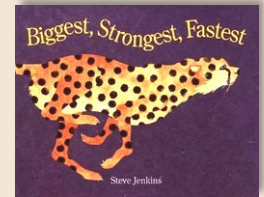


- ❖ Speak in the language that is most comfortable for you. Talk about the stories and the pictures in the books.
- ❖ Choose a quiet spot for you and your child to read aloud 15 – 20 minutes each day. Children's books have more rare words than everyday conversations or children's television programs.
- ❖ Talk to your child about what is going on around you. Talk about feelings, ideas, and how things work. Listen with your full attention when your child talks to you.
- ❖ Look for books that teach concepts, such as numbers, colors, shapes, opposites, etc. These are things that help your child be successful in kindergarten.

## Read



### **Biggest, Strongest, Fastest** by Steve Jenkins



Beautiful paper cut-outs illustrate this picture book about some of the “biggest and smallest, fastest and slowest, strongest and longest” record holders in the animal world. Children will want to read about these amazing facts over and over again!

## Choose Books



**If your child enjoyed this book, check out some of these other books by Steve Jenkins:**

*Big and Little*

*What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?*

*Sisters and Brothers*

*What Do You Do When Something Wants to Eat You?*

*Time for a Bath*

*Almost Gone: The World's Rarest Animals*

*How Many Ways Can You Catch a Fly?*

*Never Smile at a Monkey*

*The Beetle Book*

*Down Down Down*

*How to Swallow a Pig: Step by step advice from the animal kingdom*

*Flying Frogs and Walking Fish*

*Who Am I? An Animal Guessing Game*

## Why Kids Need Nonfiction



- Information books and magazines play an important part in motivating children to read.
- Information books expose children to special words and concepts, which helps build language.
- Children at this age are learning to read; in a few years they will begin to focus more on “reading to learn.” Helping your children enjoy nonfiction books at this age will help them feel more comfortable with the informational text they will read in higher grades.

## Write



Author/illustrator Steve Jenkins makes his pictures by cutting and tearing different kinds of paper and layering them into shapes, called “collage.” You can help your child make a collage with simple materials:

- A sheet of blank paper or cardboard
- Lots of different kinds of paper (junk mail, newspaper, magazines, tissue paper, etc.)
- Non-toxic glue or homemade paste (mix a little flour and water together)
- Safety scissors (or just tear the paper)

Cutting and tearing strengthen the little muscles in your child’s fingers needed to hold a pencil.

## Play



At this age, children measure things by comparing size, length and weight. Find five objects around the house. Ask your child to arrange them in order from “smallest” to “biggest.” If this is easy, choose one object and ask your child to find something in the house that is bigger, smaller, and about the same size. This activity also helps children build vocabulary.



## Sing



### We’re Going to the Zoo

(to the tune of “Farmer in the Dell”)

We’re going to the zoo,  
We’re going to the zoo!  
Hi, ho, it’s off we go,  
We’re going to the zoo!

We’ll see some monkeys there,  
We’ll see some monkeys there.  
Swinging, climbing in the trees,  
We’ll see some monkeys there!

Repeat with these animals and actions:

We’ll see some tigers ... Roaring, pouncing,  
playing about ...

We’ll see some penguins ... Waddling, diving,  
swimming around ...

Hear tune at <http://bussongs.com/songs/the-farmer-in-the-dell>

## At your library ...



**Electronic books and audiobooks:** Screen time for preschoolers should be limited; however, reading an occasional picture book with your child on your device is one way to enjoy more great stories together. Or skip the screen—listening to audiobooks develops important early literacy skills. Ask your library about e-books and audiobooks available for checkout.