

PAGE 2: This book belongs to:..... / Stick your child's photograph here. / ... and this is me!

PAGE 3: Today is the ... and I am ... months old. I can do many things already. I can grab picture books, for instance. This is my hand: _____ (Place your child's hand on this page and use a pencil to outline its fingers.)

PAGE 4: Seriously now, what's the use of books for babies? They can't even read yet. / You're right. But they love to hear your voices. / And they love books.



PAGE 5: I simply don't have time to read to them. I've got my hands full! / Is that really so much more important than spending time with your kids? / Just half an hour!



PAGE 6: What if reading isn't really their thing? / No problem. One can simply talk about the pictures. Kids love that.



PAGE 7: I enjoy reading to my children but my German isn't too good. / Don't worry. Simply use the pictures to tell a story in your language. Your child should grow fond of stories, that's the whole point. / You will find books in your language at the library. Also, your relatives could send you some. / And where can I get books? / Books are available in bookstores, at department stores, on the Internet or at the flea market. Or better still, borrow them at the Bücherhalle. It is quite inexpensive and you will find great new books there all the time!

PAGE 8: You can look at books wherever you are.



PAGE 9: It's most fun to share the books. / I agree!

PAGE 10: Sharing books with babies? / by Kirsten Boie

„What a crazy idea! Babies can't even talk yet! They wouldn't understand one bit!" Yes they would! And this is exactly the right time. Babies do enjoy looking at books together with an adult they love: sitting on one's lap, cuddling, they bring about a very special experience of closeness for both, not just for the baby. Half an hour per day, possibly at the same time every day, reliable and cosy: book babies will, for the rest of their lives, associate this sense of joy, attention and comfort with books. For book babies, as they grow up, books will continue to be a source of pleasure rather than frightening learning tools. At school this attitude allows them an easier and more joyful approach to learning. Research in many countries has shown that.

PAGE 11: With books we give our children a better start in life. Take just thirty book minutes per day and see how much book babies learn incidentally. They start talking earlier, they have more fun doing it, and they keep their linguistic advantage for the rest of their lives. Also, they gradually learn to better concentrate on things – another important skill for future success, not just in school. At first, of course, they do not just sit still to listen to the entire story quietly. Babies want to point at the pictures and they want to hear the person who reads to them name things: „Yes, exactly, that’s a cat! What does the cat say?“ Babies want to join in and determine which page you both look at and how frequently you do it. **Babies show their grown-ups what is fun.** While looking at books, one has to watch them, as always, to see what they need.

PAGE 12: Laughing and fooling around are part of the story. Nobody knows better than the babies themselves what they already understand and which developmental step to take next. And that step is different for every child. So they may interrupt at any time, to browse forwards or backwards, or even to bite into the cardboard pages. Gradually every child will realise that a book tells a story, and gradually every child will want to hear that story. Not at the very start, however. At the beginning, things will go back and forth, a thousand questions need answering, you may laugh and fool around a lot, and many a child will invent his or her own story to go with the pictures. Most of all, looking at books is meant to be fun for both parents and children, old and young alike. **Learn best by having fun!**

PAGE 13: Fun with books for children aged between 0 and 3. So how do we best share books with babies and toddlers? **Babies learn with all their senses.** They want to grab a book, hold it up, bite it. They do not want to hear a complete story read to them yet, but they love familiar voices, rhymes, songs, finger plays and knee riders. And they love endless repetitions because they enjoy recognising things. So we do not need to be constantly creative! Try out the rhymes and finger plays in our brochure then! You will surely find your baby’s favourite rhyme among them.

PAGE 14: Aged between one and two ... they still enjoy the same things. Yet now they also like listening to little stories in which they appear along with familiar things from their daily lives: getting up, bathing, eating, changing diapers, going shopping. They are thrilled to hear us imitate animal voices and insert funny and expressive words like boom!!! and crash!!! and smash!!! and whatever else comes to mind. Kids love any kind of nonsense. While we read to them they may turn the pages because they are big now and know how to do that, carefully, carefully. And they want to join in and participate while looking at books. They want us to ask them: “Oh dear, who is that, hiding under the table over there?“ And they can tell us.

PAGE 15: At about three years of age ... the above still applies. But now kids understand quite a lot already and they feel like listening for longer spans of time. Now they want to decide which story they want to hear and which book they want to look at. They enjoy nonsense stories and animal stories and stories with crazy things happening, unreal things. Yet the stories should not be too exciting and they should end happily, by all means. Stories always have a happy ending: That gives children reason to hope that it will be the same in reality. **By regularly sharing books with your children you give them an irreplaceable gift that will last all their lives.** Not only does the time spent looking at books together mean security and fun; not only will book kids learn more easily but they will also, for the rest of their lives and in every situation, know which source to turn to for fun and excitement and comfort. That is why we should give ourselves and our children the gift of this daily half-hour.